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EDITORIAL

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DESPITE the noble efforts made by Mr. de Ribbing, the distinguished Personal Representative of H.E. U Thant, Secretary-General of the United Nations' Organization, no solution has yet been found to the problem of restoring our relations with Thailand.

The stumbling-block has been Thailand's categorical refusal to join Cambodia in signing a joint declaration pledging *mutual respect for our common frontiers*.

Thailand, for its part, proposes a declaration in which the fact that it reserves its "rights" to our temple of Preah Vihear is written into the margin.

It need hardly be pointed out that a proposal of this nature could never be accepted by us.

On the other hand, Cambodia sees no objection to Thailand lodging an appeal against the verdict of the Hague Court in the "Preah Vihear case" assuming, of course, that this is feasible! Moreover, these "rights", which Bangkok intends to reserve, should not preclude Thailand - nor other countries for that matter - from affirming their respect for our present frontiers. Hitherto, France - and France alone - has done so, however, employing for this purpose an unambiguous formula, which

exclusively to Thai advantage, and prove detrimental to Cambodia's interests, while contributing in no way towards dissipating the present threat to our national security.

IT is essential to remind our readers that it was Thailand - and not our country - which took the initiative in abolishing the facilities in question.

When its full implications became apparent, Thailand had cause to rue this action taken in anger. This serves to explain the Thai desire to annul a mistaken initiative, which has never caused Cambodia the slightest inconvenience. Indeed, the contrary has been the case, as both our airline company, "Royal Air Cambodia" and those responsible for promoting tourist traffic in the national interest have been able to take advantage of the situation to extend the range of their activities, and to increase profits.

Prior to the suspension of facilities for tourists and air-travel, agencies and hotels in Bangkok thrived on tourists (Americans for the most part) who wished to visit Angkor... and arranged accommodation in Bangkok. The only contact these tourists had with Cambodia was the luncheon they took at the "Grand Hôtel d'Angkor", which was charged up to them at three times the tariff price by Thai

we recommend that they employ for this purpose.

In view of the impossibility of re-establishing diplomatic relations with Thailand at the present time, a proposal has been put forward to the effect that Cambodia should at least agree to re-establish relations at consular level, and to restore previously existing facilities for the transit of tourists, and for air-travel between the two countries.

But Cambodia has no alternative other than that of rejecting this suggestion, which would be

Travel Agents: a practice which not only brought in super-profits to the latter, but lent substance to their claim that Cambodian hotels charged "sky-high" prices.

Since those days, the situation has changed in radical fashion. Foreign visitors have noted that meals in Cambodia are not only tasty, but reasonably priced as well, and that our hotels can provide them with every comfort. Modern "Pilgrims to Angkor" stay these days in Siem Reap. It is very understandable, therefore, that the Thais should have wished to repair their "gaffe".